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Atari Online News, Etc.  
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->From the Editor's Keyboard  
"~~~~~"

"Saying it like it is!"

Well, the last of the Thanksgiving leftovers are finally gone. We had a good run, but the feasting is over. Speaking of being gone, it appears that we've seen the last of the nice weather for awhile. It's incredible to see 60-plus degree weather this late in November. I took advantage of the warm temperatures and got in what might likely be my last round of golf of the season. Now it's time to clean up the clubs, get rid of some junk in the golf bag, and put everything away for the winter. Damn. Well, I had a good run this year, and played more this season than I can recall doing over the past 20 years.

So, the holiday madness is already a week old. I'm hoping that I can manage to get all of my shopping done very early this year. It's going to be a "light" year for shopping, I think. My wife and I are going to concentrate on each other for a change, and not go crazy trying to find the perfect gift for friends and relatives - it never works out well for them no matter how hard we try anyway! So, at least my wife and I know we'll get things for each other that we want and/or need. Perfect!

So, while I continue to work on that annual shopping list, I leave you all to relax and enjoy another issue of A-ONE. Wow, almost another year's worth of issues closing in!

Until next time...

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PEOPLE ARE TALKING  
compiled by Joe Mirando  
joe@atarinews.org

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. Well, I've recovered from my annual bout with gluttony. I won't bore you with my love of turkey. If you've read my column for more than a year you know that I love turkey.

You'll also notice that I haven't brow-beaten you this year about helping the less fortunate by donating food and/or money to the local foodshare, shelter or soup kitchen.

Hell, you know they're there, right? You know that there are still those around you who are less fortunate. You might not see them every day anymore. You may not hear the pleas of local charities as loudly on the radio or on television. But you know they're there.

Stop in at your local shelter or soup kitchen and slip 'em a few bucks or that extra holiday turkey you've got in the freezer. You'd be surprised at the things they've got a need for.

Okay, enough said on that subject (for now... I'm going to hit you up again in a few weeks). Let's get to the news, hints, tips and info from the UseNet.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup  
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'Oliver' asks about RAID drives on the ST/Mega/TT:

"Just a quick question that jumped into my head after reading what the specs were for the BBS Atari in the St Guild BBS thread just below.

Noticed they were all single disks - does that mean you can't use RAID (no third party cards?) in ST/E's, Mega's or TT's?"

David Wade tells Oliver:

"I think Atari pre-dates raid by several years. If you had a reasonably up-to-date SCSI driver such as HD Driver you could use an external SCSI raid controller. For example:-

<http://www.pcmall.com/pcmall/shop/detail~dpno~7056664.asp>

However as these often present the raid volumes as multiple LUNS on a single SCSI ID you would only get two..."

Mark Duckworth adds:

"That thing would be like putting a 1000 gallon gas tank on a Toyota Corolla!"

Ronald Hall adds his thoughts:

"Hmm, would that be like a SCSI CD-changer? If so, it might work, because I used \*2\* Pioneer 6 pack CD-changers at one time on my BBS in the late 90's. ExtenDOS did great with that.

Perhaps HDDriver would support RAID in the same way?"

Dr. Uwe Seimet, author of HD Driver, adds his thoughts too:

"It depends on how LUNs are used. As mentioned in my previous posting even though HDDRIVER currently only supports two LUNs more than two can be supported with a software change.

But if automatically switching LUNs is required special software would be needed, that knows how to handle the RAID device. I guess this is what ExtenDOS does: Using the SCSI driver interface in order to control the LUN selection as needed."

Roger Burrows tells Uwe:

"That's correct, and relatively simple IIRC. From ExtenDOS's POV, each LUN is a separate device.

It seems to me that supporting RAID on the Atari could (would have to) be done entirely in software, in which case there would be no restrictions on the addresses of the devices concerned. But it would not be a trivial undertaking."

Normally I try to stay away from posts with no real name at all ('CoryG' is okay, but 'cgndlk' is just too annoying to use in the column). I'm making an exception tonight though, because the subject is so interesting.

'gnorik' posts this about his STe, IDE drives and Debian Linux:

"I am happy owner of atari 1040 ste. It has no hard drive, and I am thinking to build interface for it like described at <http://members.tripod.com/~piters/atari/astide.htm> Besides, other links to ide interfaces doesn't work.

That's why I have some questions. I've read that it should work with tos 2.0.6 but on my atari it is 1.0.6

There are some program on the site named seltos.prg , so can I use it to work with hard drive? I don't really understand how it works. If anyone has experience with it please, tell me is it use other ram locations or may be it can map tos image to location where it should be etc?

And finally...

I can't find debian/atari iso images in the net, seems they all are deleted. I found only one site:

[URL compressed by editor] <http://tinyurl.com/ynzu9n>

and there are some linux 68k cd's available. Anyway I prefer to find debian slink for atari 68k but can't find it. If I manage to find it or if I by one of the proposed cd's will linux or other unix like MiNT work with my ide drives?"

'Mark' tells 'gnorik':

"Well, if you've got a 1040ste, you've probably got 1Mb of memory and a 68000 CPU, right? I don't remember if you have an FPU in those or not. Anyway, Debian Linux requires quite a lot of memory (for our Atari's, anyway). I think the requirement according to the documentation is 32Mb (if I remember correctly). Also, a 68000 will be dead slow, and you must have an FPU, I think. So on your machine, I'm afraid Debian won't run too well.

If you have access to a higher powered Atari (like a Hades, Milan, or CT60/63 Falcon), you can get the latest Debian Linux builds for the

Atari directly from their site, or from one of the distributors listed on their site. The URL is [www.debian.org](http://www.debian.org), and you just need the 68k version, which will come with installers for Ataris, Amigas, 68k Macs, etc. I'm not sure how useful it is for us, though. This may or may not be correct, but I've read somewhere that they don't have GUI video drivers for Atari machines yet, so you're stuck with text and no GUI, which means all the fun software is off-limits. I don't know if this has changed with the most recent versions, though. I hope it has! I'd love to run Firefox on my CT60 Falcon!!!

If you're just looking for any basic Unix, Mint would be the better choice. It's faster (optimized specifically for our machines) and can run both Unix (text-only and a few X11 programs) and Atari software at the same time. For your machine, I'd recommend getting the latest Mint kernel, XaAES, and your favorite desktop (Teradesk is a free one that's great for lower-spec'd machines)."

'Jimmie' asks if there's...

"anyway to mount a hard drive inside a 1040stf?"

Everyone's favorite techie, Alison, tells Jimmmie:]

"If you wait a couple of months you won't have to. Exxos and I are getting seriously close to releasing our ACSI hard disk that plugs straight in the back of an ST. No soldering, as far as the ST is concerned it's just a totally standard Atari ACSI hard drive. It uses SD cards and will be about 2" square. Transfer rate is in the region of 500-1000Kbytes/second."

Henk Robbers tells Alison:

"That s great! I want to have one.  
The SD card will make it effectively an exchangeable HD?"

'Maurice' adds his elation to Henk's:

"Fantastic news! Great to see people still developing hardware for the ST. Keep on keeping on."

Jerome Mathevet adds:

"So, that's why we had no news from you during all this time... Well if I had known that, I wouldn't have ordered a cartridge port solution from Poland (paskud.pl)... that i'm still waiting for :( Hopefully matters will be resolved (the guy claims to be very busy job-wise) before christmas ...

Anyway that's excellent news and i'm eager to see what your hard disk is looking like."

Well folks, that's it for this week. Tune in again next week, same time, same station, an be ready for me to hammer you a little bit more about charity donating to worthwhile causes... and be ready to listen to what

they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News      -   The Latest Gaming News!
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## Nintendo Says Sells 600,000 Consoles In 8 Days

Nintendo Co. Ltd. sold 600,000 units of its new Wii video game console in the first eight days after its release in the Americas, as the company vies with rivals Sony Corp. and Microsoft Corp. for gamers' hearts and wallets.

Including sales of accessories and games, Nintendo's Wii-related revenue had hit \$190 million since the machine's November 19 release, the company said.

At \$250, the Wii costs half as much as the cheapest version of Sony's PlayStation 3 console, which went on sale in the United States two days before the Wii hit the market.

Many fans of both systems lined up at retailers hours or even days in advance of the launches to guarantee they were among the first to claim ownership of the highly anticipated machines.

The consoles are also being hawked on Internet auction sites such as eBay for several times their retail price tag.

"We've shipped retailers several times the amount of hardware the other company was able to deliver for its launch around the same time - and we still sold out," Nintendo of America President Reggie Fils-Aime said in a statement.

Sony has not revealed how many PlayStation 3 consoles it has sold in North America so far, but has said it aims to have shipped 1 million units by the end of the year.

Microsoft has shipped more than 6 million of its Xbox 360 since launching

it in November 2005.

### New Games Call To Trekkies

After a three-year drought, gamers can again boldly dive into a new series of "Star Trek" games now in stores.

Bethesda Softworks enlisted Dorothy "D.C." Fontana, a veteran "Star Trek" scribe, to guide these new adventures. She worked on the original 1960s series and wrote the story lines for Bethesda's first titles, "Star Trek: Legacy" for Xbox 360, and "Star Trek: Tactical Assault" for PSP.

"Game technology grows more and more innovative, more and more able to match the look of film and high-definition TV," Fontana said. "With the quality visuals now available, it puts the game experience on par with watching a movie or TV episode with the added benefit of being interactive."

Fontana became familiar with the video game realm after working on a previous "Star Trek" game, Activision's "Star Trek: Bridge Commander." In 1998, Activision signed a 10-year exclusive video game deal with Viacom for video game rights to all things "Star Trek." Two years ago, Activision sued Viacom over the license, claiming that the studio was not supporting the property with new films and TV series.

After the lawsuit was settled last year, Bethesda Softworks stepped in with a new multiyear deal to bring "Star Trek" video games to multiple platforms. The deal includes all "Star Trek" licenses, TV shows and films up to the present, but it does not include new properties like the new feature film J.J. Abrams is developing for Paramount Pictures.

Fontana worked on the game stories with writing partner Derek Chester, who also worked with her on the "Bridge Commander."

"Dorothy and I both have suggested things at times that the designers have found to be an interesting idea, and they will occasionally take those and flesh them out to add to the gameplay experience," Chester said. "As a writer, it's fantastic to add onto the 'Trek' mythology with a respect and adherence to canon."

"Legacy" makes full use of the next-generation capabilities of Xbox 360, bringing high-definition graphics to the "Star Trek" franchise. The game introduces a new Vulcan protagonist and an original story that spans 40 years and all five TV shows. All five captains from the TV series signed on to provide voices for the new game, which allows players to take command of various starships from the shows and engage in space combat.

But even with that kind of star power and next-generation visuals, games still must abide by the age-old rules of showbiz. If the script doesn't work, no amount of graphics power can help. As a result, Fontana always concentrates on the story first.

Fontana believes the advances in game technology that next-generation systems are introducing will attract more Hollywood creative talent to the gaming realm.

"As video games proliferate more and more, more writers may become

interested in being involved," Fontana said. "'Pac-Man' was an amusing game, but it had no story. Today, the games have to have more going on in them - story, character, crisis or conflict, goals. Because of that, I believe writers will begin to see the possibilities in this form of storytelling."

## 2006 Next-Gen Console Picks

If you want the cutting edge in graphics, look no further than the next generation consoles. Here are some of our GameCore favorites.

### Microsoft Xbox 360

"Gears of War" - The graphics are astounding, and there is also plenty of substance to go with the style. The game combines the frenetic pace of "Halo 2" with the tactical nuance of "Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter." While you are free to charge at your enemies like a cavalryman in the Light Brigade, you might be better off hiding behind cover and providing suppressing fire while your teammates outflank them. If you find the latter more appealing, then this game is for you.

"The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion" - This is one massive role playing game. You can easily spend over a hundred or so hours immersing yourself in this fantasy world.

"Call of Duty 3" - World War II first person shooters never seem to get old. The latest installment of the popular franchise shouldn't disappoint fans.

"Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell: Double Agent" - While one can argue that the latest "Splinter Cell" is a minor update of its predecessors, the gameplay still makes it worth taking a look.

"NBA 2K7" - Credit 2K Sports with its continued attempts to improve its basketball series instead of glossing over it with superficial additions. This is the best basketball game on Xbox 360.

### Playstation 3

"Ridge Race 7" - Available when the PS3 launches, Ridge Racer 7 will satisfy your racing appetite for the PS3. The graphics and scenery look amazing and racing in HD is even better. You can pull off some insane drifts very easily. Compared to most Xbox 360 games out on the market now, Ridge Racer 7 is top notch. The frame rate is extremely smooth and vehicle customization is great.

"Call of Duty 3" - Call of Duty 3 is the reason why a gamer should buy a PS3. Released just in time for the holiday season, this title is on our list just out of principle. The detail on this game is ridiculously great, and makes it seem like you're on the front lines with the troops. This PS3 version offers a far better graphical presentation than the other platforms. Call of Duty 3, available on release date for the PS3, should be a guaranteed pickup for your WWII shooter fan.

"Genji: Days of the Blade":

Genji: Days of the Blade (GDB) is set three years after the events that unfolded in the PS2 version, Genji: Dawn of the Samurai. Playing the first



game is not necessarily a requirement for playing the new one, but it will be helpful for a better understanding of the story arc that's taking place. Definitely a step up from its predecessor, GDB offers a graphical experience not seen on PS2. Using the new motion detection wireless controller you'll be able to tilt your way around your enemies. Being able to swap between four main characters gives Genji a unique approach to confronting enemies. If you like third person action/adventure then chances are you might like this one as well.

#### "Resistance: Fall of Man":

If you like first person shooters set in a World War II-type environment replete with alien-like creatures and weapons then Resistance: Fall of Man is a must have for PS3. Insomniac Games - the creators of Ratchet & Clank - spent many a sleepless night creating this shooter. Resistance features the standard modes of play that accompany first person shooters such as single player, 2-player co-op, 4-player offline split-screen multiplayer and up to 40 players online. Fighting off the Chimera - a species of unknown origin - (no throwbacks to Full Metal Alchemist), Resistance provides, you (the good guy) with an assortment of weapons to tickle your fancy. This game is rated M for mature audiences only since blowing avatars to bits is not for under age kids.

#### "Heavenly Sword":

If you like incredible odds, fighting vast numbers of units at once, with plenty of sword hacking to boot, then Heavenly Sword is your game. Developed by Ninja Theory Ltd., Heavenly Sword is a standard action/adventure game which features single player, sword slashing mayhem in a plush environment. Thanks to the combat engine, you'll be able to take out your frustration on a large number of enemies at once. Not to worry though, you'll definitely have a range of weapons to choose from - including the handy bazooka for special moments.

### Nintendo Wii

#### "Wii Sports":

Wii Sports, the only pack-in game that comes with the Wii console system, puts you right into the game. You have a choice of five sports titles, Tennis, Baseball, Golf, Bowling and Boxing. Using the Wii Remote and Nunchuck control system, Wii Sports allows you to really take part in the action by swinging, ducking, pointing, boxing, pitching, etc. Up to four players at one time can participate in most of these games.

#### "Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess":

Link is back and has been given a bit of an upgrade on the Nintendo Wii. He's a little older now and so is the style of game play. Link embarks on his new adventure in the land of Hyrule with his trusty sword, shield and some new gadgetry like his bow and arrow. New fighting mechanics in the game allow Link to take on his enemies from atop his steed and dispense with them in a knightly fashion. The Wii Remote and Nunchuk control system allows you greater control over Link's moves in various ways. This is an adventure game which that is definitely rated 'T' for teen.

#### "Metroid Prime 3: Corruption":

Dark Samus, a once incredible threat presumed dead, has somehow resurfaced and could potentially reek havoc across the universe. Developer Retro Studios has given Samus a big upgrade, and now that she's back, boy is she mad. With the Wii Remote and Nunchuk control system, Samus has entered a different level of play. By simply aiming with the pointer you can open doors, grasp and move things. This first-person shooter allows players to experience a quantum leap from the eyes of Samus as they wield

the Wii Remote controller. All of Samus' traditional weapons - morph ball, bombs, etc. - are back, and trust me you'll need them.

#### "Excite Truck":

If you remember the days of Excite Bike (from the old Nintendo Entertainment System), you might feel a bit nostalgic about Excite Truck. The pools of water, patches of ice (to cool your bike down) and sand traps are back but far more realistic than its 8-bit predecessor. Now instead of a bike, you're riding in style, controlling a race truck. Using the Wii Remote, players take control of the trucks in this off-road racer, performing jumps, drifts, high speed turns, etc. by tilting, turning and steering. Developed by the creators of NASCAR Heat, (NASCAR Heat 2002, and NASCAR: Dirt to Daytona), Monster Games brings the excitement of off-road racing to your finger tips. This game is Rated 'E' for everyone.

### 2006 Handheld Console Picks

Just because you're stuck on a train, in a car or worse - waiting in line - doesn't mean you can't get your game on! Just because there is a lot of coverage and media focus on the PlayStation 3 and Nintendo Wii launches, along with Microsoft's latest game offerings, that doesn't mean the handhelds should be off your list this season.

In fact, there are great titles for the Sony PSP and Nintendo DS handheld systems coming out now that you should keep your eye on. In return, some of them will even be easy on your wallet. And who doesn't appreciate that during the shopping season?

#### Sony PSP

You shouldn't look at lower priced or "budget" games as an inferior product. Here are a few great PSP games that are easy on the pocket:

"Power Stone Collection" is a collection of two older Sega Dreamcast games merged into one. It's a solid and slick fighter that is every bit as fast and fun as it originally was. Retail price \$30.

"Rush" is Midway's racing series brought down to the portable scene with breakneck speed that won't break your pockets. Retail price \$30.

"SEGA Genesis Collection" is a great value as it has over 30 classic Genesis games under one roof, along with extras that make it a great bargain as well as an incredible snapshot of gaming history. Retail price \$30.

If puzzle games are your thing, or you enjoy music/rhythm based games, "Lumines 2" will easily fit the bill with more music options and a great price. Retail price \$30.

If your bonus came though (hooray!) and you have a little extra to spend this season, why not check out these titles for the PSP:

"Need for Speed: Carbon" continues the legacy of fast cars and customization goodness while introducing new concepts such as team-based racing. Retail price \$40.

"Ace Combat X: Skies of Deception" is Namco showing the world how to make

an awesome flying game on the PSP. Retail Price \$40.

"Killzone Liberation" continues the Killzone storyline in a whole new third-person isometric perspective. Part shooter, part strategy equals completely intense and addictive action. Retail price \$40.

"Justice League: Heroes (DC Comics)" or "Marvel: Ultimate Alliance (Marvel Comics)" are tied for the last PSP spot. Both combine the dungeon crawl/hack and slash game with the completeness of their respective comic book universes. If your gamer is a Superman/Batman fan, get "Justice"; if they enjoy Spiderman/Wolverine, get them "Alliance." Retail price \$40.

"SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs Fireteam Bravo 2"  
Sticking with what works makes this a great game. Not only is all the action that made the first Fireteam Bravo a hit, now new missions and new features such as air strikes places 'Fireteam Bravo 2' an absolute hit. Retail price \$40.

"Grand Theft Auto: Vice City Stories"  
This pick is a no-brainer. The Grand Theft Auto series always delivers with its unique storyline, and amazing gameplay. Vice City Stories is a prequel to the 2004 PS2 release of GTA: Vice City. Its set a few of years prior to the original and you play as Vic Vance, the brother to the infamous Lance Vance from GTA Vice City. Filled with all the great plot twists and turns, and a groovy 80s soundtrack, having GTA: Vice City Stories on your PSP should be required. Retail price \$40.

Nintendo DS

"Cooking Mama" is a simple and fun set of minigames that is based on cooking. It's lighthearted and challenging at just the right speed - and you can't beat the price! here. Retail price \$20.

"Gunpey DS" is a classic puzzle game updated for the DS and is, at its essence, why gamers love puzzle games so much. Retail price \$30.

"Castlevania: Portrait of Ruin" will utilize WiFi capability to play cooperative in certain modes, so you don't have to go demon slaying alone. Retail price \$35.

"Elite Beat Agents" is a quirky "touch the screen to the music" game that had me laughing within minutes of playing it! Music and rhythm game fans will LOVE it. Retail price \$35.

"Children of Mana" is an action RPG with colorful visuals and button pounding gameplay. If your gamer is a fan of "Zelda," he or she will enjoy it. Retail price \$35.

"Pokemon Ranger" literally lets you "catch them all" by actively drawing loops around the Pokemon on your screen like a lasso. This game caught me completely by surprise by honestly being more fun than I thought it would be. Retail price \$35.

"Phoenix Wright: And Justice for All" is the second adventure game starring our intrepid lawyer. Seeing as how the first game completely sold through it's initial print run and became an instant "must find" game last year, do yourself a favor and pick this one up when you see it. Retail price \$35.

"Final Fantasy 3" brings the series to the DS with touch-screen controllable menus, updated graphics and music while keeping the mechanics of gameplay faithful to its roots. A "must have" for the DS. Retail price \$40.

"Wizard For Sale, One Careful Owner, 15,000 Hours  
Experience - £199.99 (No Offers)"

Market research conducted by one of the world's most recognised gaming brands, Atari, for its forthcoming online blockbuster, Neverwinter Nights 2, has uncovered some telling facts about Britain's online gamers.

Online gaming is booming thanks to faster broadband, new super-consoles, and WiFi-enabled handhelds, and with this growing global gladiatorial arena comes a seedy underground movement of ePimps cashing in on those prepared to flaunt the rules and cheat their way up the league tables.

Most online games require a significant commitment from the player in building their character's stats, or obtain the best kit, upgrades, weapons or reputation. In some cases this can mean thousands of hours of online dedication. However, high-tech groups located in third-world countries, nicknamed ePimps, are openly offering fast-tracks to the leader board by selling fully-loaded characters created in overseas gaming sweatshops.

Kids and students are paid a pittance to slave over a PC for days churning out over-ready avatars by performing mundane in-game tasks to artificially boost a character's stats. These then find their way onto auction sites like eBay and bulletin boards, and can change hands for hundreds of pounds.

The research conducted by Atari in the UK found that 92% of British gamers would never consider purchasing a prostituted game character. In fact, only 6% of those questioned admitted they have done so in the past, and 2% have tried to sell a game character online.

Luke Newcombe, from one of the UK's biggest online gaming portals, news0r.com, said, "This is a growing and unfair practice, particularly in Role Playing Games (RPGs), where a gamer can spend years developing their online persona. It's more prevalent in the US, but it's good to see that us Brits are more inclined to play by the rules."

PR Manager, Lee Kirton for Atari, added, "We know that when Neverwinter Nights 2 released at the beginning of the month, a plethora of oven-ready characters went on sale off the back of it. We certainly don't endorse it, but we're powerless to stop this unscrupulous trading."

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## EU Says More Than Half E-mails Are Spam

Unsolicited e-mails continue to plague Europeans and account for between 50 and 80 percent of all messages sent to mail inboxes, the European Commission said Monday.

EU Media Commissioner Viviane Reding called on EU governments to step up their fight against spam, spyware and other illegal online activities and implement EU rules to improve Internet safety.

An EU report found that only two EU nations, the Netherlands and Finland, were making inroads in enforcing the 2002 law to crack down on spam.

"Spam is still ... making up to between 50 and 80 percent of the mails that we are receiving in Europe and two-thirds of that is coming from outside the European Union," said EU spokesman Martin Selmayr.

Selmayr said Dutch authorities were able to reduce spam by 85 percent by using fines to get businesses to fall in line with the EU rule.

The Dutch telecommunications watchdog OPTA slapped euro60,000 (\$78,500) in fines on three companies late last year for sending spam, and the Commission wants other governments to act as well, Reding said.

"I'd like to see other countries achieving similar results through more efficient enforcement," she said in a statement.

EU officials have said they will put forward new legislation next year to make it easier to prosecute spammers.

Monday's EU report said spam cost euro39 billion (\$51.1 billion) worldwide last year, according to San Francisco-based Ferris Research Institute.

Selmayr said the biggest culprit of spam remains the United States, which accounts for 21.6 percent of spam coming into the 25-nation EU. China is the second-biggest producer with 13.4 percent, while EU member France is third with 6.3 percent.

## Firefox 2 Browser Struck by Password Flaw

Mozilla's Firefox 2.0 has long been considered a safer Web browser than Microsoft's Internet Explorer, but a new flaw in the Firefox Password Manager, which lets users store usernames and passwords for trusted Web sites, could let hackers steal their login data.

The problem, known as a reverse cross-site request, or RCSR, was first discovered by Robert Chapin, a Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer (MCSE) and I.T. consultant. The RCSR appears on blogs, message boards, or group forums that let users add comments with embedded HTML code.

On sites that allow users to enter code, a hacker can embed a form that tricks the user's browser into sending its username and password information to the hacker's computer. Because the form is embedded on a trusted Web site, the browser's built-in antiphishing protection, which is

designed to alert users to fraudulent Web sites, does not detect the problem.

Even worse, hackers can make the deceptive form invisible, meaning users can transmit their private data without even knowing it.

The Mozilla Foundation, which maintains code for the Firefox browser, has acknowledged the problem and named it bug #360493. Microsoft has also admitted that RCSR attacks can affect Internet Explorer, but most reports indicate that Firefox is the more likely target because of the way it stores usernames and passwords.

Neither Mozilla nor Microsoft has released a patch for the problem, but users can avoid RCSR attacks simply by disabling their browsers' autosave features for usernames and passwords. In Firefox, the feature is found in the "Options" window under the "Tools" menu.

Mozilla has indicated that it plans a fix in Firefox version 2.0.0.1 or 2.0.0.2.

Most experts agree that Firefox is by and large the safer of the two major Web browsers, largely because Microsoft, on account of its size, draws more attention from hackers.

Indeed, the last two years have seen monthly and sometimes weekly reports of new bugs in Internet Explorer, letting hackers do everything from hijack a user's computer to corrupt its private data.

But Microsoft released a new version of IE - version 7.0 - in October, and Mozilla quickly followed suit with version 2.0 of Firefox. Both versions boast enhanced security, including antiphishing features that check Web sites against an online database of known frauds. And Internet Explorer 7 also offers much-requested improvements to the interface, such as tabbed browsing.

At present, Microsoft controls the bulk of the browser market - estimates put IE usage at 80 percent to 90 percent - but Firefox is nipping at its heels.

#### Mac OS X Spyware Sample Spotted

Anti-virus researchers have spotted the first signs of an adware/spyware program capable of launching browser windows on Apple Computer's Mac OS X.

According to a warning from F-Secure, a security vendor in Helsinki, Finland, the proof-of-concept program could be silently installed on a Mac's User account and hooked to each application used by that account.

The company said the sample, named iAdware, successfully launched the Mac's built-in Safari Web browser whenever applications were being used.

"We won't disclose the exact technique used here," F-Secure said, noting that the program was manipulating a feature in Mac OS X. "It's a feature, not a bug, but let's just say that installing a System Library shouldn't be allowed without prompting the user," the company added.

The F-Secure notice said the adware program does not require administrator rights.

"An admin could install this globally to all users," the company said.  
"This is easier to do than with Windows. After all, it's a Mac."

Security experts have long warned that the Mac platform is not immune to malware attacks, and the appearance of a Mac-specific adware sample suggests that online scammers are tinkering with ways to target Apple's user base.

#### Password Theft, Video Files Top List of Security Threats

McAfee's Avert Labs research group on Nov. 29 released its annual report on the Top 10 security threats likely to grow in severity during the coming year, highlighting expectations for continued professionalism among malware code writers and a range of attacks on emerging technology platforms in 2007.

The trend toward malware writers and online fraudsters who bring a high level of professionalism to their work will dominate the IT threat landscape, according to Dave Marcus, security research and communications manager at McAfee Avert Labs.

Long gone are the days of script kiddies who created attacks almost purely for sport. They have been replaced by organized networks of code writers who conduct quality assurance tests on their malicious code and offer software updates to the people using their programs to steal money from businesses and end users.

As a result, the threats that Santa Clara, Calif.-based McAfee expects to arrive during 2007 will exhibit a growing sophistication in the methods they employ in attempting to hide themselves in seemingly legitimate applications, and in finding ways to garner sensitive personal and financial information, Marcus said.

Along those lines, McAfee researchers said that the volume and variety of Web sites built to steal users' information, such as in phishing schemes, will continue to proliferate. Many of those sites will offer counterfeit sign-in pages designed specifically to mimic the Web interfaces used by popular sites such as eBay.

Unwanted spam e-mail continues to serve as the primary delivery method for many phishing attacks and so-called botnet programs, and the security company is expecting the quantity of the unsolicited messages to rise again over the next year, much as they have during 2006.

Another source of threats projected to increase during 2007 is the use of "potentially unwanted programs" to serve up adware onto users' PCs. Those programs typically identify themselves as helpful or entertaining applications, only to serve as a backdoor for other unsolicited code, such as spyware and software used to assail computers with pop-up advertisements.

McAfee contends that the use of botnet programs by hackers to carry out other crimes will also continue to grow, as the model allows code writers to distribute their attacks over widely dispersed systems, making it harder for users to detect their presence and for law enforcement officials to

track down cyber-criminals. Botnets involve programs hidden on multiple computers that are secretly used to carry out other forms of attacks.

The recent surge in e-mail spam hawking penny stocks and penis enlargement pills is the handiwork of Russian hackers running a 70,000-strong botnet powered by hijacked computers in more than 160 countries.

As a result of the success the researchers expect malware writers to enjoy using all these techniques, McAfee is projecting that identity theft and personal data loss related to online crime and stolen hardware will become an even more high-profile issue among businesses, regulators and consumers over the next 12 months.

Among the newly-emerging threats identified by the researchers as growing in significance and frequency in 2007 will be attacks carried out over video-sharing sites and technologies, as malware writers try to capitalize on the rapidly increasing popularity of YouTube, MySpace and similar Web destinations, and peer-to-peer file sharing systems.

Marcus said that hackers will specifically target music and video MPEG files as a manner for hiding their code. The researcher highlighted the recent discovery of the W32.Realor worm virus, which is hidden in multimedia files and can launch malicious Web sites on infected machines without user prompting, as the type of attack his company expects to see more often.

In a recent test of the content stored at popular file-sharing sites such as LimeWire and BitTorrent, nearly one-third of the materials had hidden Web site redirects onboard, although few of the related URLs were ultimately found to be malicious in nature, the researcher said. However, as hackers catch on to the notion of embedding attacks in multimedia files, he expects malicious activity based on the technique to take off.

"With Realor, people thought they were downloading multimedia files, but they were also having their browsers redirected to Web sites with malicious code," Marcus said. "In this approach, malware writers are putting malicious content in place of legitimate content in a format that's very effective; it's very easy to embed malware content into this type of file and people will download without ever thinking about the security risk. Combined with the popularity of peer-to-peer, instant messaging [and] other media sharing sites, there's definitely a cause for concern."

Another emerging target for attacks are mobile devices, specifically driven by the growing adoption of smart phones, which offer more PC-like functionality and data storage capabilities that many of today's popular handhelds. As more users adopt smart phones that use the same operating system software, made by companies including Microsoft, Research In Motion and Symbian, it will make it easier for hackers to target larger groups of users with mobile malware, according to McAfee.

In terms of malware itself, Marcus said that McAfee expects parasitic attacks, or viruses that modify existing files on a disk, to begin making a comeback.

While such attacks account for only 10 percent of all viruses charted today, the ability of hackers to hide the threats easily, including rootkit attacks, is expected to inspire more of the parasitic viruses.

McAfee specifically expects the number of rootkits aimed at 32-bit



platforms to increase, but the company said that efforts to protect against and remediate the attacks will also ramp up significantly over the next year.

In another nod to the professionalism of attackers, McAfee researchers said they also expect to see underground markets for malicious software code and software vulnerability data continue to spread out.

Those issues, along with the distributed nature of the attackers themselves, will only make it harder for law enforcement officials to track down and prosecute individuals responsible for creating IT threats, Marcus said.

"Worldwide we don't have worm outbreaks like we saw in 2004, since the goal now for the malware code writers is making money through stolen data or adware, and we see more stealth software like rootkits and static code dropped on the machine to go about doing their tasks in secret," he said. "Organizations like the FBI and Secret Service have been on the forefront of looking at all this as being created by professional organizations, but it's a very borderless situation, which makes it that much harder to find people and prosecute them."

#### Epson Stops Ink-Makers

Fewer Epson-compatible ink cartridges from third-party manufacturers will be available, because the printer vendor has convinced a number of manufacturers and importers to stop producing and marketing them.

Last February, Epson filed a complaint with the U.S. International Trade Commission against 24 companies that manufacture, import, or distribute after-market ink cartridges for sale in the U.S. The complaint sought to ban the companies from importing or selling the cartridges in the U.S. At the same time Epson filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court in Portland against the same companies seeking damages for the alleged intellectual property infringement.

Of the 24 companies, five have agreed to settle with Epson at both the ITC and district court. A further three companies have agreed with the ITC to stop importing cartridges, but will have their cases heard at the district court.

Another eight companies have had default judgments filed against them at the ITC because they failed to respond to the complaint with the time allowed, said Epson. Trials against the remaining companies at the ITC will begin in January.

The settlements and judgments are the latest in a line of legal victories by Epson against third-party ink-cartridge makers, distributors and vendors.

In June, a court in Taiwan barred a local manufacturer of continuous ink supply systems from producing models for Epson printers after receiving a petition from the Japanese company. A month earlier Epson succeeded in getting four German online retailers of printer ink cartridges to stop selling a number of third-party ink cartridges designed for use in Epson printers.

The company won a similar legal action against a Japanese manufacturer in June 2005.

Printer makers like Epson typically rely on a business model that sees them selling printers at little or no profit, then making money down the line on ink cartridges and other consumable items. Epson sells its own replacement cartridges and licenses a number of companies to make and sell Epson-compatible products. The third-party vendors targeted by Epson have no relationship with the printer-maker and so it doesn't directly gain from any of their business.

#### Microsoft Launches Vista Version of Windows

Microsoft Corp. launched Windows Vista for businesses on Thursday, unveiling the first major upgrade of its dominant operating system in five years and predicting that over 200 million people will run new Windows, Office or PC server software by the end of 2007.

Vista upgrades the operating system used on more than 90 percent of the world's computers and features translucent windows to make it easier to view items on the desktop, an improved search system, and improved reliability and security. The world's largest software maker will not make Vista widely available for retail customers until January 30, giving computer manufacturers time to load the operating system onto new PCs.

Plagued by a series of development delays, Windows Vista is the cornerstone of a new product cycle at Microsoft and a crucial litmus test for the company's ability to maintain its grip on desktop computer customers.

At the same time it faces fierce competition from Web rivals such as Google Inc., which is offering software-like Web services, and electronics makers such as Apple Computer Inc. and Sony Corp. Apple's iPod music player and Sony's PlayStation video game console series dominate markets that Microsoft covets.

Along with Vista, the new Office 2007 software suite and Exchange server became available to business customers on Thursday.

"This is the biggest launch in our company's history. That's for sure," Chief Executive Steve Ballmer said at a presentation in New York.

Microsoft's Windows and Office business accounts for more than half of its sales and almost all of its profits, but even more importantly its steady cash flow allows the company to venture out into new business areas such as digital music players, game consoles and mobile phone software.

"It's a keystone of Microsoft's product launches going forward. It's pretty darn important that it performs well both in the marketplace and on your PC," said Kim Caughey, an analyst at Fort Pitt Capital, which manages more than \$1 billion, of which less than 2 percent is in Microsoft stock.

Microsoft said it plans to spend "hundreds of millions" of dollars to market the Windows upgrade. The marketing budget will eclipse the \$500 million Microsoft spent to market Windows XP, the predecessor to Windows Vista, Ballmer said.

In the first year of release, Vista will be installed on more than 100 million computers worldwide, according to research firm IDC. Nearly 60 percent of all new PCs in 2007 will run Vista, according to research group Gartner.

"We're going to have a quicker uptake on Vista and Office 2007 as a percentage of the installed based in business than we had on XP or Office 2003. I feel pretty good about that," Ballmer said in an interview following the presentation.

"Does that mean we will have 60 percent of business desktops converted in 12 months? No, it doesn't mean that."

Consumers buying the Vista software off the shelf will pay between \$199 and \$399 for versions ranging from basic to "ultimate," although new computers almost always come with a version of Windows installed and corporations tend to have massive licensing deals.

Among the changes in Office 2007 is a ribbon at the top of the screen that displays the most commonly used functions.

And one of Microsoft's main selling points to business customers is Vista's beefed-up security, including a feature that encrypts data aimed at preventing people from stealing information from lost or stolen laptops.

#### Google Suffers Setback In Copyright Case

Yahoo Inc. has rebuffed Google Inc.'s attempt to learn more about its efforts to create digital copies of books, dealing the Internet search leader another setback as it prepares to fight against a copyright infringement suit.

In rejecting Google's request, Yahoo adopted the same stance taken last month by Internet retailer Amazon.com Inc.

Google believes it can defend its plans to provide online access to millions of library books by obtaining more details about similar projects involving some of its biggest rivals.

A group of publishers and the Authors Guild sued Google in a New York federal court last year, alleging the Mountain View-based company didn't get proper approval to make copies of books available to anyone with an Internet connection.

As it gathers evidence for its case, Google has subpoenaed Amazon.com, Yahoo and Microsoft Corp., among others.

Both Yahoo and Microsoft are part of a large alliance of businesses and libraries working together to create a digital database of books. Amazon.com has scanned a large number of books so consumers can read excerpts from books that they may want to buy.

Like Amazon.com, Yahoo lashed out at Google's request as a brazen attempt to pry into its trade secrets.

"There is simply no need for Google to be peering into the minds and computers of Yahoo employees," Yahoo's lawyer wrote in a 17-page list of

objections delivered to Google last week.

Sunnyvale-based Yahoo provided The Associated Press with a copy of its objections Wednesday. The objections eventually may become public record if Google asks a judge to force Yahoo to comply with its subpoena.

As of late Wednesday, Google hadn't responded to a request for comment about Yahoo's objections.

Microsoft declined to discuss its response to Google's subpoena.

### Companies Face New Rules On E-mails

U.S. companies will need to know more about where they store e-mails, instant messages and other electronic documents generated by their employees in the event they are sued, thanks to changes in federal rules that took effect Friday, legal experts say.

The changes, approved by the Supreme Court's administrative arm in April after a five-year review, require companies and other parties involved in federal litigation to produce "electronically stored information" as part of discovery, the process by which both sides share evidence before a trial.

Federal and state courts have increasingly been requiring the production of such evidence in individual cases. The new rules clarify that the data will be required in federal cases.

Under the new rules, an information technology employee who routinely copies over a backup computer tape could be committing "virtual shredding" once a lawsuit has been filed, said Alvin F. Lindsay, a partner at Hogan & Hartson LLP and expert on technology and litigation.

Companies still could routinely purge their archives if the data aren't relevant to cases companies have pending or expect to face, though specific sectors such as financial services remain governed by other data-retention rules.

The new rules make it more important for companies to know what electronic information they have and where, especially because of a provision that requires lawyers to provide information much earlier than before on where their clients' data are stored and how accessible they are.

Large companies are likely to face higher costs from organizing their data in order to meet those deadlines, said James Wright, director of electronic discovery at Halliburton Co. Besides e-mail, he said, companies also will need to know about things more difficult to track, like digital photos of work sites on employee cell phones and information on removable memory cards.

There are hundreds of "e-discovery vendors" and these businesses raked in approximately \$1.6 billion in 2006, Wright said. That figure could double in 2007, he added.

Lawyers will have to spend time reviewing electronic documents before turning them over, Lindsay said. Although electronic searches can help narrow the amount of data, some high-paid lawyers will still have to sift

through casual e-mails about subjects like "office birthday parties in the pantry" to find the relevant information, he added.

But Martha Dawson, a partner at the Seattle-based law firm of Preston Gates & Ellis LLP who specializes in electronic discovery, said companies will not have to alter how they retain their electronic documents. Rather, she said, they will have to do an "inventory of their IT system" in order to know better where the documents are.

The new rules also provide better guidance on how electronic evidence is to be handled in federal litigation, including guidelines on how companies can seek exemptions from providing data that isn't "reasonably accessible," she said. This could actually reduce the burden of electronic discovery, she said.

### 1 In 5 Parents Say Kids Online Too Much

One in five American parents believe their kids are spending too much time on the Internet, though most say the online activities haven't affected grades either way.

In a study to be released Wednesday by the University of Southern California, 21 percent of adult Internet users with children believe the kids are online too long, compared with 11 percent in 2000. Still, that's less than the 49 percent who complain their kids watch too much TV.

About 80 percent of the children say the Internet is important for schoolwork, although three-quarters of the parents say grades haven't gone up or down since they got Internet access.

Forty-seven percent of the adults say they have withheld Internet use as a form of punishment. Banning television is still more popular, reported by 57 percent of adults surveyed.

The study, meanwhile, found that although only 27 percent of cell phone owners use them for text messaging, photo transmitting and other non-voice functions, the figure grows to 54 percent among those 18-24 and 45 percent among those under 18.

The study has been conducted most years since 2000. Over that time, researchers have seen Internet use grow to 78 percent, from 67 percent. Access at home increased to 68 percent, from 47 percent.

In one of the few surveys to look at why people are offline, the study found the lack of a working computer most often to blame. Of the 22 percent of Americans who do not currently use the Internet, more than a quarter are former users who dropped out.

"Almost nobody drops out out of dissatisfaction," said Jeffrey Cole, director of USC's Center for the Digital Future. "The reason most people drop off is they change jobs or their computer breaks."

But more than half the former users have no intention of returning online, the most ever. Overall, 60 percent of non-users have no plans to go online within the next year.

Cole said the numbers raise the prospect of a permanent subclass of

non-users. "Internet penetration has largely plateaued," he said.

Americans 66 and over remain the most disconnected, with only 38 percent online.

For all other age groups, at least 74 percent are online, with penetration hitting 99 percent for those 18 and under, likely because most U.S. schools now have some form of Internet access.

On average, users spend 14 hours a week online, compared with 9.4 hours in 2000.

Thirty-seven percent of home Internet users still have dial-up accounts, compared with 26 percent for high-speed cable modems and 24 percent for DSL. Eleven percent of Internet users go online through mobile devices, not necessarily exclusively, averaging two hours a week.

The study revealed little change in the effect on television. Thirty-six percent of home Internet users say they have spent less time watching TV since they started using the Internet, roughly the same as the 33 percent who said that in a 2001 survey.

Cole said the increased use of high-speed connections has a lot to do with that.

When people were on dial-up, they were accessing the Internet 20 or 30 minutes at a time, "generally time not spent watching television," Cole said.

"Broadband changed all that. They are on 30, 40, 50 times a day for two or three minutes at a time. It's not a big bucket of time displacing television."

People may be paying less attention to television commercials, though, fitting in online use during program breaks, he said.

That said, 41 percent of veteran users, those online for more than nine years, say they have spent less time watching television, compared with only 23 percent among those who have joined the Internet within the year.

The study found nearly a quarter of online users, especially newcomers to the Internet, say they spend less time reading.

The telephone survey of 2,269 U.S. households was conducted in English and Spanish from February to April and included follow-up interviews with respondents to his previous studies. The study has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

#### "Finland's Sexiest Man" Ends Romance With Txt Msg

Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen, dubbed Finland's sexiest man, broke up by text message with the girlfriend he had met on the Internet, she said in a magazine interview.

"Matti dumped me in a text message, where he said 'that's it'," Susan Kuronen told the magazine Me Naiset (Us Women) in an interview published on Friday.

Her relationship with Vanhanen, a divorced 51-year-old father of two, ended a few weeks ago, but continues to make headlines as Susan, 36, pours her heart out in local media.

Vanhanen, who declines to comment on the relationship, was cited as Finland's sexiest man by French President Jacques Chirac earlier this year, when Finnish tabloids were running daily front-page details of the romance.

Finland is home to mobile phone giant Nokia and its citizens are among the most avid users of the Internet.

### Work Away From Work Gets Easier With Technology

Trying to match the convenience and efficiency of the office while on the road is an ongoing battle for business travelers.

The explosion in wireless Internet connectivity in recent years has been a huge boost to productivity. Wi-Fi hot spots are just about everywhere. Now, new applications of technology and a growing number of services geared to business travelers are taking matters a step further.

Business travelers are discovering ways to stay productive in between meetings and on rides to the airport.

Here are some of the things that road warriors tell USA TODAY work for them:

#### Tools for handhelds

DataViz, a Connecticut-based company, has produced traveler-friendly software for smartphones and other personal digital assistants.

It's timely because many business travelers are relying exclusively on their Treos and BlackBerrys, particularly on short trips.

Its Documents To Go software lets you read and edit Microsoft Office files and portable document format (PDF) files on smartphones and pocket PCs. Prices start at \$30. Palm Treo phones come bundled with it.

Its RoadSync software is also popular, because it synchronizes handheld devices with the Outlook e-mail system at work. It downloads messages as they come into the corporate server. Without the software, many PDA users wishing to check e-mail have to download them from the server every time.

Treo and BlackBerry users don't face this inconvenience, as those devices are designed to download e-mail in real time. But people with other models will need it if they want real-time e-mail.

#### Remote access

Most travelers tap into the work computer through virtual private networks, secure gateways set up to keep intruders out. Because VPNs are often slow or unreliable, several companies are offering alternatives.

Joshua Keough, an engineering company executive in Jiangsu, China, is a frequent user of KoolSpan's connection system. "It basically makes my computer work as if I'm sitting in the corporate headquarters anywhere in the world," he says.

It is an electronic "lock and key" combination for the work computer.

Matt Capoccia, a KoolSpan sales executive, says the product delivers in a remote laptop the look of the work computer. The system, which includes a lock, 10 keys and software, costs \$4,950.

Business traveler Mitchell GoozØ, a marketing and sales consultant in Santa Clara, Calif., recommends a similar product called Gotomypc.com. Made by Citrix, Gotomypc.com is a website that replicates the work computer at any computer once you log on with a password.

The subscription fee is \$20 per month.

#### Vitual meetings

WebEx's WebOffice and Citrix's Gotomeeting.com each host Web meetings and allow participants in different locations to share documents and displays.

Once you sign on, you can elect to share a file, software or even your entire computer with others.

Chris Pearson, an Ypsilanti, Mich.-based consultant, says he uses WebEx for client meetings and training classes.

WebEx starts at \$59 a month for hosting up to 10 people per meeting. Gotomeeting costs \$49 per month.

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